or entre by the President Mr Minnewell

A FUNERAL ORATION.

OCCASIONED BY THE DEATH OF

1453.0.15

General George Washington.

WRITTEN AT THE REQUEST OF THE

Boston Mechanic Association,

AND

Delivered before them, on the 22d of FEB. 1800.

By JOSEPH TUCKERMAN.

Confulere patriz, parcere afflictis, fera Code abstinere, tempus atque iros dare, Orbi quietem, szculo pacem suo, Hze summa virtus, petitur hac colum via.

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BOSTON:

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At a Meeting of the Trustees of the Mechanic Affociation, Feb. 22, 1800.

N Motion, Voted, That the Thanks of the President and Trustees of this Affociation, in behalf of the Mechanic Interests of the Town of Boston, be presented to Mr. Joseph Tuckerman, for the pathetic, elegant and judicious Oration, commemorative of the sublime Virtues and pre-eminent Services of the late GENERAL WASHINGTON, delivered by him this Day; and that he be requested to surnish a Copy thereof for the Prefs.

JAMES PHILLIPS, Sec'ry. A true Copy of Record,

BOSTON, February 24, 1800.

SIR,

WE have the Pleasure to communicate the following unanimous Vote of the Board of Trustees of the Mechanic Association; and to assure you of the respectful Consideration with which we have the honor to be, Your most obedient, humble Servants,

JONATHAN HUNNEWELL, BENJAMIN RUSSELL, WILLIAM TODD.

Mr. JOSEPH TUCKERMAN.

Boston, February 24, 1800.

GENTLEMEN,

WITHOUT apology, I present to you the Oration written at your request. Its savorable reception demands my gratitude; and I only desire, that it may be perused with that candor, which should ever distinguish those productions, which derive their principal merit from the subject by which they are occasioned.

I am, Gentlemen,

With great respect, Your humble Servant,

JOSEPH TUCKERMAN.

Mr. JONATHAN HUNNEWELL, Mr. BENJAMIN RUSSELL, Mr. WILLIAM TODD.

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Hrestdent, and Gentlemen of the Wechanic Association,

WE have affembled to commemorate an event, which will ever be confidered as one of the most interesting and melancholy, in the history of our country. An event, which, as it awakens every mournful sensation, should also excite our gratitude to him who is the disposer of all things, and to whose divine interpositions we are indebted for our freedom, sovereignty and independence.

It is, Gentlemen, perfectly consistent with the character which you have uniformly presented, to meet at this time, in order to pay the last respects to the memory of your departed friend and political

with him, the arduous toils in which he was engaged, and by the firmness of their conduct, acquired those stations, which could be gained only by superior merit. With these advantages, you are sensible of his worth, and are desirous of exhibiting the only testimony of affection which is now in your power. To this exercise you are prompted by the best inclinations of your natures; and he who has implanted gratitude in man, and given him a spirit to understand and to support his rights, will look with an approving smile, on this pleasing and instructive duty.

On this day, we have been accustomed to indulge the fervor of our love, in celebrating the birth of WASHINGTON. A recollection of the fervices which he performed, of the dangers to which he was exposed, and the unparalleled magnanimity which he at all times discovered, then ferved to keep alive the flame of patriotism in our breasts, and constantly to render his character more dear to our minds. On this occasion, every heart exulted, and every tongue proclaimed his praise. We reverted to the season, when, governed by foreign laws and foreign manners, we



existed only as the tributaries of a nation, to whose command our resources were subjected, and by whose authority every action was controlled. The powerful contrast between this condition, and that which was secured to us by the first of men, called forth the warmest essusions of our souls, and induced us to behold him as formed by Heaven, for the accomplishment of this great and important end. To him, we traced all the happiness which resulted from liberty, and all the blessings which were attached to a free Constitution.

But for the testimonials of joy, we now substitute the badges of grief; and the pleasure which beamed from every countenance, is exchanged for the gloominess of forrow. If then it be permitted to regret the loss of a friend, endeared to us by a similarity of sentiment; if we may lament a removal of our benefactor, who has interfered in the hour of distress, and rescued us from ruin; if we may indulge our reslections on the deprivation of a parent, who has facrificed his own, to procure our enjoyment; or rather, who has found his highest satisfaction in promoting our felicity, it cannot be deemed improper to express our feelings, when death has taken from us one, in whom all these characteristics were connected. Let us then endeavor to analyze the life, and to display the merits of our illustrious Chief. These are so well known, that a relation of them, will only be a recurrence to those impressions, which are deeply engraven on the mem-

ories of all.

GENERAL WASHINGTON was born on the twenty-fecond of February, feventeen hundred and thirty-two, and was the fon of a planter, refiding in the State of Virginia. Under the direction of a private tutor, he imbibed those maxims, which have confummated his greatness, and fecured for his country an unrivalled respect among the nations of the world. His defire for military attainments, presented itself among the first impulses of his mind. At the early age of fifteen, when youth, accustomed only to the domestic circle, shrinks from the appearance of danger, he had made preparations to enter the marine fervice in the capacity of a midshipman. Yielding however to the folicitations of a fond mother, he abandoned this favorite intention. years had elapsed, before he was again invested with the infignia of a foldier; and fuch were the extent



extent of his views, the richness of his invention and the fortitude of his mind, that at twenty-one he was deputed on a commission, which required for its execution the hardihood of a veteran, and the skill of an accomplished General. His remonstrances not being attended with the desired effect, he was sent to gain by his prowess, what the force of argument would not produce; and in his conquest at Redstone, he gave a prelude of those abilities, which, but a short time after this, saved from destruction the scattered forces of a British officer, whose haughty spirit distained to receive instruction from one, so much younger than himself in the arts of war.

Ar the establishment of peace in seventeen hundred and sixty-three, he retired to his estate, to cultivate the milder virtues of private life; and sormed that connexion, from which he anticipated his suture happiness. At this time he probably acquired that love of retirement, which appeared so conspicuous through the rest of his life. In seventeen hundred and seventy-sour, he was a member of the Continental Congress; and on the sisteenth of June, '75, was unanimously chosen by

by them, commander in chief of the American armies. The manner in which he performed this duty, through the long and tedious space of eight years, will not require a recital. Or, if any would ask for evidences, we would point to almost every part of our extensive country. We would ask him to behold the present state of our nation, which, under God, is indebted to his exertions, for the greatest portion of the respectability by which it is distinguished.

Among the many inflances of valor which appear in his life, we might advert to the prudent, yet determined conduct, which preferved this town from the destructive fury of its disappointed adversaries. We might call your attention to witness the immortal glory which he acquired at York, Trenton, Monmouth and Princeton. But it will be sufficient at this time to observe, that having to regulate, to clothe and to arm an undisciplined body of men; and not only to contend with the power of his enemies, but with the doubts, the prejudices and the wants of those who had enlisted under his banners, he achieved those wonders, which will ever command the admiration of the world. He was, in effect, the absolute

ruler

ruler of our nation; and from his acceptance of the supreme command, to his resignation in seventeen hundred and eighty-three, its whole operations were directed by his counsels.

Our rights being secured, the necessity of establishing them on a permanent foundation was soon perceived. The disordered state of our sinances, and the derangement of our public affairs urged the immediate performance of this. And in the Convention assembled for the purpose, WASH-INGTON was elected to the Presidential chair.

In seventeen hundred and eighty-nine, he was elevated by his countrymen to the dignity of President of the United States; and having twice officiated in this capacity, with that wisdom which was peculiar to himself, he again took his leave of public life. He descended from the most honorable station in which he could be placed by the power of man, to the humble rank of a citizen. I say the most honorable station, because it was given by the suffrages of a free people, who were acquainted with the excellence of his character, and the benefits, which from this source had resulted to his country. His farewell address contains

contains the principles on which his government was founded; and comprises a system of national policy, unexampled in ancient or modern times. An observance of its directions will lead to true greatness, and furnish characters like himself, to perpetuate our glory and our happiness.

THE official letters of General WASHING-TON, during our revolutionary war, will be preferved as a record of the strength of his abilities, the purity of his motives, and the address with which he treated every fubject connected with his station. They will teach your children the hardthips which he encountered, the discouragements which appeared at every step of his progress, and the unfhaken virtue which he exercised, even in fituations, where it could fearcely be deemed a crime to deviate. In perufing thefe, they will contemplate with wonder, his foldiers unused to war, and wavering through fear at those periods when fortitude was most effential; and yet, with his affiftance, performing works, which would have reflected honor on troops inured to toil, and accustomed to success. But they will particularly observe his reliance on the Providence of Almigh-TY God, and the firmness of his mind, which proceeded proceeded from a consciousness that he was contending only for that freedom, which the God of nature intended for his rational offspring. Liberty, and not conquest, was the object of his wishes; and so plainly does this appear, that even calumny has not dared to offer a contradictory infinuation.

Is we were here to close our retrospect of the conduct of this wonderful man, posterity would consider no additions as necessary for the completion of his virtues. As a hero and legislator he will ever stand superior to competition, and be quoted as a model of all which can dignify the character, and secure glorious fame. But if we contemplate him in his retreat, interested indeed for the welfare of his country, yet unambitious of preferment; if we view him as acting in the capacity of a common juror; and again, when our privileges were endangered by foreign aggreffion, confenting to quit the scenes of tranquillity to which he had become strongly attached, and accepting a fecond fituation in command, we shall acknowledge that he has attained the summit of human excellence, and that panegyric is loft in the mention of his name.

WASHINGTON

WASHINGTON in early life, poffeffed a warm and impetuous disposition. This was probably the cause, which incited him so early to commence that career, which has been fo honorable to himfelf and fo productive to his country. But with a heart which was influenced by every tender fenfibility, he corrected that ardour, which might otherwise have produced the most unhappy effects. He knew how to mingle ambition with humility; zeal, with prudence; and a love of his country, with a love of mankind. He possessed the most effential qualities of the most renowned men; and has been fo wife, yet unaffected in every measure which he proposed; so regular, yet refolved in every action, that in a review of his virtues, we know not which most to commend. By his unvaried presence of mind, he secured the admiration of the brave, and by his caution, he won their confidence; by the judiciousness of his administration, he acquired the esteem of that band of patriots over whom he prefided; and by the purity of his life, gained the affection of the good, and the hallowed remembrance of ages yet unborn.

THE character of the beloved hero, whose death we deplore, was marked with those traits, which

are rarely to be discerned among the conquerors of mankind. Christian benevolence glowed in his heart, and animated his conduct in every fituation. To be generous, is ever the characteristic of a brave man. It is a quality fo nearly related to true courage, that wherever it cannot be perceived, we pronounce the action to be rash and unmanly. Every imputation of this kind was avoided, by that spirit of humanity, which was mingled with every deliberation. He fought only for the religion and civil rights, which were bestowed on us by the God whom we ferved, and used no other methods for the acquisition of these, than what were confistent with the end which he proposed. In passing with him through the late contest, which terminated in the independence of our country, we may indeed lament, that so many fell as victims of delusion; but we must love the heart, which melted with pity for the fufferings of an adversary; we must venerate the man to whom no one was indifferent, and who possessed those feelings, which equally recommended him to friends and foes. The trade of war was to him unknown. And that fystematical cruelty, which within a few years has desolated families, extirpated thousands from the earth, and immolated

lated on its bloody shrine, the innocent mother, with her helpless children, was avoided by his mild and pacific temper, which was formed by a love of the religion of the Prince of Peace.

To benevolence fo refined, he added that humility, without which, greatness loses half its charms. He was never actuated by that pride, which would elevate him above those to whom his fervices were devoted. But viewing himfelf as one, who, with the rest was to partake of the fweets, for which they were mutually laboring, he considered no man, however low, as undeferving of his notice. He possessed a dignity to which few could rife; but in him, it was without any mixture of pride. It originated from the harmony of his mind, which gave order to all that he performed. A truly humble spirit is equally distant from that arrogance, which can contemplate only its own merit; and that meanness and pulillanimity, which dares not aspire to active virtue. In him it was an operating principle, which appeared in all his behavior; and gave to his character that mild, but uniform luftre, which will continue brilliant, when those, who in idea have embraced the subjugation of the To world, shall be funk in darkness.

To a humble mind, he united an equanimity of temper, which enabled him to act with undeviating propriety. Amid the diforders of a tent, and the confusion of battle, his thoughts were composed, and his commands the result of meditation. The greatest warriors who have appeared, have flamped on their names an indelible difgrace, by fubmitting to those turbulent passions, which a trivial disappointment has occasioned. The biography of heroes, is generally a catalogue of crimes. They have legalized murder, to gratify fome prevailing propenfity. But in him, to whom we are now directing your view, there was displayed an uninterrupted regularity. He was calm in reflecting on every action, and unmoved in the hour of danger. And, if we remember the difficulties through which he paffed, the obstacles he was obliged to furmount, and the unwearied patience which he preserved, we shall without hefitancy, place his morality, among the most diftinguished which has adorned the nature of man.

Such were the virtues which appeared in his life; and they originated from that pure source, from whence alone real worth can flow. Of this we have an undeniable testimony, in the legacy,

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which, with parental tenderness, he has bequeathed to us. Having there connected religion with morality, he has made them indispensable supports of political prosperity; and exhorted us not to indulge supposition, that one can be maintained without the other. Reason and experience join to convince us, that religion is the firmest cement of civil government; and they who would oppose this, are not merely the enemies of one state, or nation, but of mankind. The ancient lawgivers, to enfure the fuccess of their fystems, added to them the authority of the gods: And the modern philosophy, which has been substituted for the doctrines and precepts of the gospel, presents a melancholy instance of that depravity, to which those morals are always subject, which are not established by a fanction, higher than human resolution. Thus piety was a striking feature of his life. Without this, he might indeed have been a conqueror, and enrolled his name among the murderers of mankind. Without this, he might have attained fame and affluence. But his riches would then have been only new means of corruption, and his reputation ferve but to extend the curses which would attend it. Instead of this, we behold him, equally an example of piety

piety and patriotism. With a love of his country, which can be compared only to his love of goodness, he has reared a fabric, which will continue so long as America is a nation; and even when it is decaying with age; when it yields to the ravages of time, will command astonishment, as magnificence in ruins,

Few are capable of knowing the trials of exalted stations. There are many vices, which from our peculiar fituations we are not able to commit; but when invested with power, we have a cloak, under which they may be concealed from the fight It is the greatest temptation which we have to withstand in the present life. A love of glory leads to excesses, which the ability of gratifying, too frequently affords a fufficient palliation for the greatest crimes. But in the whole progress, through which we trace the footsteps of him whom we would now commemorate, we can perceive no marks, which lead even to a fuspicion of The malignity of envy has not been able to place a spot on his name. In him, we behold one, whom elevation could not bewilder, nor flattery deceive. Who received power, as intrusted to him, for the advantage of those by whom it

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was bestowed; and desired more their peculiar welfare, than his own aggrandizement. We deduce this from evidence the most incontrovertible; it is from his conduct; and its truth is so strongly impressed on our minds, that a relation of it, precludes the necessity of proof.

WITH a character so ennobled, we have been favored. We mention it, not to boast of his superiority, but to excite our gratitude. Surely we cannot recur to the blessings, which Providence through him has granted, without feeling those lively emotions, which savors so signalized should demand. He was the pride of his friends, the glory of his country, and the wonder of the world. By his public virtues, he acquired the admiration both of Europe and America, and the most celebrated men of the age have sought the honor of presenting their respects to him.† By

As an attellation of this, three evidences may be cited, which are indeed among the most signalized. Dr. Franklin in his will, bequeathed his gold-headed cane to General WASHINGTON, accompanied with the remark, "If it were a sceptre, he would deserve it." He likewise received a sword from the King of Prussia, bearing the motto, "From the oldest, to the greatest General in the world." And from the Earl of Buchan, "a Box, made of the oak that sheltered the great Sir William Wallace after the battle of Falkirk. This box was presented to the Earl, by the Goldsmiths' company at Edinburgh; but seeling his newerblines to receive this magnificently significant present, obtained leave to make it over to the man in the world, to whom he thought it most justly due."

his domestic qualities, he secured the affections of a family, whose happiness was interwoven with his own. He had all which could attach man to existence. His fame had extended as far as civilization, and his name was cherished, wherever virtue was loved. Hail fainted shade! Thou now inhabitest a happier clime. We would view thee, as among the children of the bleffed. We would congratulate thee on the possession of a crown, which will continue with undiminished brightnefs, when the laurels of the prefent life shall fade, and be no longer a testimony of distinction. Thy name shall ever live in the memory of a grateful country, and thine actions be celebrated with increasing honors. We bid thee farewell.

On this occasion, we would fympathize with the unhappy widow, who peculiarly experiences the severity of this divine dispensation; and with the most sincere affection, would commend her to him, to whose presence, we trust, the disembodied spirit of her husband has now ascended.

To the officers and foldiers of our armies, we would offer him as an example through every part of his life. We would demonstrate from his actions,



actions, that religion is not incompatible with valor; and urge them to cultivate his virtues, as they would attain his greatness.

To all classes of men, we would recommend an obedience to the principles which he has presented, as the best method of testifying their sorrow for his loss; or rather, to yield an observance to his injunctions, whom WASHINGTON rejoiced to obey. We have been deprived of one, on whom our reliance was placed without reserve, Let us endeavor as far as possible to repair this loss, by reposing the same considence in ADAMS, his illustrious successor.

It is worthy of remark, that in feventeen hundred and feventy-fix, WASHINGTON was intrusted with a dictatorial power. If ambition had been his favorite passion, he might now have fatiated his appetite. It may likewise be remembered, that at the close of the war, when the armies were disbanded and unpaid, that anonymous and instammatory papers were circulated, to persuade the soldiers to rise, and to acquire by force, that redress, which it was not in the power of Government to bestow. At this time also, he might

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might have taken the reins of empire, and made himself the monarch of our nation. But he quelled the tumult by his eloquence, and allayed those disordered feelings, which were ready to burst on the country just rescued from oppression. The better to display his merits in this respect, we might contrast him with the late invader of Egypt. We might oppose that disposition, which preferred the good of others, to his own same; to that temper, which stimulates man to hesitate at no facrisice for the accomplishment of his object, and to consider power as an excuse for every crime, which the aspiring mind may dictate.

ATTEND, then, Warriors, Statesmen, Citizens! and behold one worthy of your imitation. Equally to be admired in peace and war; equally able to command and to obey. Governed by those eternal principles, which proceeded from the source of truth, he had learned to conquer himself, before he attempted to subdue others. He whose military character will form a new epoch in the pages of history; whose wisdom in design, and prudence in action, will vie with the united sagacity of the most celebrated heroes, was a votary of religion. While therefore we indulge

indulge the language of grief; while with drooping hearts and dejected countenances, we pause at a remembrance of the loss we have sustained, let us raise our eyes to heaven; and recurring to the blessings of which he is participating, anticipate the time when we may dwell with him forever.



